



Tom Lantos

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
~~RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER~~**

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Sending Suspects to Countries That Torture is Wrong, Lantos Says

Washington, DC – Congressman Tom Lantos, the ranking Democrat on the House International Relations Committee, today said recently-introduced legislation restricting the U.S. practice of “extraordinary rendition” is even more urgently needed now that the Administration has reportedly reaffirmed its support for the practice.

“Protecting human rights is a fundamental value for Americans,” Lantos said. “Engaging in practices that might violate this value will not make us safer. Although the Administration has said it is not U.S. practice to render suspected terrorists to countries where we know – or even believe – that they're going to be tortured, the fact is that this apparently continues to happen, and it's unacceptable.”

Lantos is an original co-sponsor of the Torture Outsourcing Prevention Act (H.R. 952), which protects individuals under the legal control of the United States from being transferred, removed, extradited, returned or rendered to countries with much less stringent human rights protections for the purpose of detention, trial or interrogation. Recent news reports indicate that a classified presidential memo has authorized the CIA to conduct extraordinary renditions, sending prisoners to countries where the use of torture is frequent, in order to gain information to aid the global war on terror.

“Sending suspects to countries where they might be tortured, or where they would have a reasonable fear of being tortured, is not only morally reprehensible, but also ineffective,” Lantos said. “The information gained from torture is often neither reliable nor actionable. And the practice of delivering people to be tortured will only fan the flames of hatred against the United States.”

(End)